

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing an activated carbon, comprising:

~~a mixing step for~~ mixing a carbonaceous material and an alkali metal hydroxide while maintaining a solid state to obtain a mixture;

~~a granulating step for~~ granulating the mixture ~~obtained in the mixing step~~ while maintaining ~~its~~ a solid state to obtain a granulated product;

~~a dehydrating step for~~ dehydrating the granulated product ~~granules obtained in the granulating step~~ while maintaining ~~its~~ a solid state to obtain a dehydrated product; and

~~an activating step for~~ subjecting the ~~dehydration~~ dehydrated product ~~obtained in the dehydration step~~ to an activation treatment to ~~give an~~ obtain the activated carbon.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature ~~of the granulation treatment in said granulating~~ is 80°C or more.
~~more in the granulation step.~~

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~claim 1 or 2~~, wherein the pressure in said granulating ~~of the granulation treatment~~ is 0.01 to 300 Torr, and the temperature ~~of the granulation treatment in said granulating~~ is 90 to 140°C.
~~140°C in the granulation step.~~

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein the maximum diameter of the ~~granulation~~ granulated product ~~obtained in the granulation step~~ is 50 mm or less.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 or 4~~, wherein the temperature in said dehydrating ~~of the dehydration treatment~~ is 200°C or more. ~~more in the dehydration step.~~

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The ~~manufacturing~~ manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 5~~, wherein the pressure in said dehydrating ~~of the dehydration treatment~~ is 0.01 to 10 Torr, and the temperature in said dehydrating ~~of the dehydration treatment~~ is 200 to 400 °C. ~~400°C in the dehydration step.~~

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein during said dehydrating, the pressure (Torr) and the temperature rise rate (°C/minute) are set so as to satisfy the following equation (2),

$$Pv < 15 \quad (2)$$

~~where in the equation, wherein~~ P is the pressure, ~~pressure (Torr) during the dehydration treatment~~, and v is the temperature rise rate. ~~rate (°C/minute) during the dehydration treatment.~~

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~, wherein the carbonaceous material is an easily graphitizable carbonaceous material.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 8~~, wherein the carbonaceous material is a mesophase pitch carbon fiber.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 9, wherein the mesophase pitch carbon fiber ~~is a pitch carbon fiber containing~~ comprises 50 vol% or more of an optically anisotropic phase.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 9~~, wherein the carbonaceous material ~~used in the mixing step~~ comprises grains with a maximum length of 500 μm or less in the direction of the major axis.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide has an average particle diameter of 1 mm or less.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 12~~, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide and/or potassium hydroxide.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 13~~, wherein no less than 1 part by weight of alkali metal hydroxide is mixed with 1 part by weight of carbonaceous material in said mixing. ~~the mixing step.~~

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~any of claims 1 to 14~~, wherein the ~~activation treatment~~ temperature in said activation treatment ~~the activation step~~ is 500°C to 900°C.

- Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the rate at which the temperature is raised to 200 to 600°C is 5°C/minute or less, and the holding time at a holding temperature of 700°C or more is 0.5 to 8 hours in the activation treatment step.

Claim 17 (Original): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, wherein the rate at which the temperature is raised to 200 to 600°C is 2°C/minute or less.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, ~~16 or 17~~, wherein the holding time at a holding temperature of 700°C or more is 1 to 6 hours.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, ~~any of claims 16 to 18~~, wherein the holding temperature is 700 to 850°C.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, ~~any of claims 16 to 19~~, wherein the activation treatment is performed in a rotary kiln.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 20, wherein the activation treatment ~~with the rotary kiln~~ is a continuous process.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali metal in vapor form that is generated during activation treatment is sorbed to the activated carbon material for sorption by circulating inert gas through the system in at least the activation step treatment and bringing contacting the circulating inert gas ~~into~~

~~contact~~ for 0.5 seconds or more with the activated carbon ~~material~~ for sorption ~~that wherein~~
the activated carbon has been heated to a temperature of 300 to 800°C.

Claim 23 (Original): The manufacturing method according to claim 22, wherein the circulating inert gas has a linear velocity of 1.0 to 10.0 mm/second.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the granulation step and dehydration step~~ said granulating and said dehydrating are performed so as to satisfy the following equation (3),

$$[A1/B1] \geq [A2/B2] \quad (3)$$

~~where~~ wherein A1 (N) is the crushing strength of the ~~granulation~~ granulated product, B1 (cm) is the diameter of the granulated product, ~~granulation product obtained in the granulation step~~, A2 (N) is the crushing strength of the ~~dehydration~~ dehydrated product, and B2 (cm) is the diameter of the dehydrated product. ~~dehydration product obtained in the dehydration step.~~

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, ~~wherein in the mixing step, the carbonaceous material is mixed with~~ further comprising adding a finely pulverized carbonaceous material to the alkali metal hydroxide to which carbonaceous material prior to said mixing had been added in an amount of 0.5 to 10 wt%. ~~wt% in advance and which had finely been pulverized.~~

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 25, wherein variation in the composition ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide ~~in relation~~ relative to

the carbonaceous material in the granulation granulated and/or dehydration dehydrated
product ~~prepared in the granulating and/or dehydrating steps is held to~~ is 5% or less.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 26,
wherein variation in the composition ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide ~~in relation~~ relative to
the carbonaceous material is 2% or less.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): A dehydration product for an activated carbon
obtained by the process comprising
mixing a carbonaceous material and an alkali metal hydroxide while maintaining a
solid state to obtain a mixture,
granulating the mixture ~~obtained~~ while maintaining its solid state to obtain a
granulated substance, and
dehydrating the granulated substance ~~obtained~~ while maintaining its a solid state to
obtain the dehydrated product;

wherein ~~this dehydration~~ said dehydrated product ~~for an activated carbon~~ satisfies the
following equation (1),

$$[M1/C1]/[M2/C2] \leq 2.4 \quad (1)$$

where [M1/C1] is the alkali metal/carbon ratio in the surface layer region thereof, and
[M2/C2] is the alkali metal/carbon ratio in the center portion thereof.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): The activated carbon obtained according to the
manufacturing method as claimed in claim 1 ~~in any of claims 1 to 27~~.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): An activated carbon obtained by the process comprising

activating carbonaceous material with an alkali metal hydroxide,
wherein the standard deviations of the relative peak strengths of the graphite D band, the amorphous G band, and the graphite G band in relation to the peak strength of the amorphous D band are 0.05 or less, ~~assuming that~~ wherein the peak strength of the amorphous D band in the Raman spectrum is set to 1 when 20 observation points or more are measured.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): A polarizable ~~electrode, wherein~~ electrode obtained by mixing and molding

the activated carbon according to claim 29, ~~claim 29 or 30, and at least~~
a binder and
a conductive filler. ~~filler are mixed and molded.~~

Claim 32 (Original): The polarizable electrode according to claim 31, wherein the metal content is 300 ppm or less.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): The polarizable electrode according to claim 31, 34 or 32, wherein the polarizable electrode optionally comprises iron, copper and/or nickel and the iron, copper, and nickel contents are each 20 ppm or less.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The polarizable electrode according to claim 31, ~~any of claims 31 to 33~~, wherein the electrode density of the polarizable electrode is 0.80 g/cc or more.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): An electric double-layer capacitor ~~having~~
~~comprising~~ the polarizable electrode as claimed in claim 31. ~~according to any of claims 31 to~~
~~34.~~

Claim 36 (Currently Amended): The electric double-layer capacitor according to
claim 35, ~~claim 33~~, wherein the electrostatic capacity is 30 F/cc or more.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): The electric double-layer capacitor according to
claim 35, ~~any of claims 33 to 34~~, wherein the retention rate of the electrostatic capacity is
maintained at 90% or more after repeating charging and discharging 500 times, the charging
and discharging consisting of charging with a constant current and discharging with a
constant current.

Claim 38 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing an activated carbon by
subjecting a carbonaceous material to an activating treatment with the aid of an alkali ~~metal-~~
~~containing~~ metal-comprising activator, ~~wherein said method comprises a step for said method~~
comprising

preparing a mixture ~~of a~~ comprising the carbonaceous material and ~~[[an]]~~ the alkali
metal-comprising metal-containing activator, ~~a step for~~

heat treating the mixture, ~~a step for using~~
pressure molding the mixture to obtain a molded product, ~~and product by pressure~~
~~molding, and a step for using~~

performing the heating process of the activating treatment to the molded product.
~~product to perform the heating process of the activation treatment.~~

Claim 39 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing an activated carbon by subjecting a carbonaceous material to an activating treatment with the aid of an alkali metal-comprising metal-containing activator, ~~wherein said method comprises a step for said method comprising~~

preparing a mixture of a comprising the carbonaceous material and ~~[[an]] the~~ alkali ~~metal-containing metal-comprising~~ activator, ~~a step for using~~

hot-pressing the mixture at 2 MPa or more and less than 40 MPa to obtain a molded product ~~by hot pressing at 2 MPa or more and less than 40 MPa, and a step for using~~

performing the heating process of the activating treatment to the molded product.
~~product to perform the heating process of the activation treatment.~~

Claim 40 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, ~~claim 38 or 39~~, wherein the weight ratio $[W_2/W_1]$ is set to 2.5 or less, where the weight of the carbonaceous material is W_1 , and the weight of the alkali metal activator is W_2 .

Claim 41 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, ~~any of claims 38 to 40~~, wherein the alkali metal-comprising metal-containing activator is an alkali metal hydroxide.

Claim 42 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, ~~any of claims 38 to 41~~, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is potassium hydroxide.

Claim 43 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the heating temperature of the mixture in the heating said hot-pressing treatment and the hot press treatment is set to 300°C or less.

Claim 44 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the pressure applied to the mixture in ~~the~~ said pressure molding process of the molded product is 5 MPa or more.

Claim 45 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the pressure applied in said hot-pressing the hot press treatment is 2 MPa or more.

Claim 46 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, any of claims 38 to 45, wherein the specific surface area of the activated carbon is 1,000 m²/g or less.

Claim 47 (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, any of claims 38 to 46, wherein the activated carbon optionally comprises nickel and the nickel content in the activated carbon is 20 ppm or less.

Claim 48 (New): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the weight ratio [W₂/W₁] is set to 2.5 or less, where the weight of the carbonaceous material is W₁, and the weight of the alkali metal activator is W₂.

Claim 49 (New): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the alkali metal-comprising activator is an alkali metal hydroxide.

Claim 50 (New): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is potassium hydroxide.

Claim 51 (New): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the specific surface area of the activated carbon is $1,000 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ or less.

Claim 52 (New): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the activated carbon optionally comprises nickel and the nickel content in the activated carbon is 20 ppm or less.